



**CITY OF SCOTTSDALE
TOURISM ADVISORY TASK FORCE
REGULAR MEETING**

Wednesday, June 18, 2014

**Arizona State University SkySong
Global Room #201
1475 North Scottsdale Road
Scottsdale, Arizona 85257
APPROVED MINUTES**

PRESENT: John Holdsworth, Chairman
Matthew Wright, Vice Chairman
Cory Baker
Margaret Dunn
Gabrielle Enriquez (left at 12:49 p.m.)
Richard Hayslip (left at 11:59 p.m.)
Taryl O'Shea
Fred Unger

ABSENT: Kate Birchler
Craig Jackson

STAFF: Steve Geiogamah
Holli Shannon
Paul Katsenes
Ben Moriarity
Cheryl Sumners
Nicole Curtis

GUESTS: Valeri LeBlanc, PLACES Consulting
Joey Eschrich
Carl Grupp, TDC
Rachel Sacco, SCVB
Ace Bailey, TDC
Rachel Pearson, SCVB
Kathy Duley
Sandy Schenkat
David Smith
Susan Morrow-Potje
Crystal Wehby
Nicole Curtis

Donna Isaac, Scottsdale Public Art
Cindy Karstens

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

In the presence of a quorum, the regular meeting of the Scottsdale Tourism Advisory Task Force was called to order at 9:04 a.m.

2. Public Comment

Sandy Schenkat said the Arts District, which used to be downtown Scottsdale's crown jewel, has lost its luster. She has spoken to many gallery owners who feel that the City is not listening to their needs. The Scottsdale Gallery Association has limited options. The City could do more to keep the appearance of Main Street in top shape, but the district needs a substantial boost of energy. The Task Force should include a representative from the Arts District. Within the next month, there will be eight vacant storefronts on Main Street. The landlords need to be held accountable. She suggested that Valeri LeBlanc provide some suggestions on how the district can be saved. She noted that USA Today recently named Phoenix's Roosevelt Row as one of the ten best arts districts in the country.

Chairman Holdsworth explained that the Task Force includes the interim President of the Cultural Council and several members who are very much involved in the arts. All citizens had the opportunity to apply to the Task Force. The Task Force has a number of initiatives related specifically to the arts. Task Force Member Unger concurred, but acknowledged that there is a common misperception among city leadership that downtown is in good shape. This is not true about Marshall Way, Main Street and the Arts District.

3. Approval of Minutes

TASK FORCE MEMBER UNGER MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MARCH 19, 2014 MEETING OF THE TOURISM ADVISORY TASK FORCE AS PRESENTED. TASK FORCE MEMBER HAYSLIP SECONDED. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY BY A VOTE OF EIGHT (8) TO ZERO (0). TASK FORCE MEMBERS BIRCHLER AND JACKSON WERE ABSENT.

4. Tourism Advisory Task Force Budget

Mr. Geiogamah reported that \$625,000 has been carried over into the FY 2014/15 budget for potential use on Task Force initiatives during the next year. A total of a little over \$2 million has been identified for the entire Five-Year Tourism Development Plan. The potential exists to move funds forward with City Council approval. He estimated that pending initiatives would require about \$300,000 to fund.

5. Tourism Advisory Task Force Bylaw Revisions

Chairman Holdsworth noted that Pam Gilbert was unable to continue serving on the Task Force, which leaves one vacant seat. The bylaws contained a limited mechanism for appointing a replacement. A proposed amendment would allow the Task Force to appoint someone from the list of alternates already approved by City Council. Mr. Geiogamah noted that the appointment would not occur until after the amended bylaws were ratified. Several other administrative revisions are being included for practical reasons, based on the experience of the past year.

TASK FORCE MEMBER UNGER MOVED TO APPROVE THE BYLAW REVISIONS AS PRESENTED. TASK FORCE MEMBER HAYSLIP SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED BY A VOTE OF EIGHT (8) TO ZERO (0). TASK FORCE MEMBERS BIRCHLER AND JACKSON WERE ABSENT.

Task Force Member Unger proposed that staff contact each of the three alternates to determine their level of interest in joining the Task Force at this time. Ms. LeBlanc noted that all three alternates have been very active in Task Force related activities. Chairman Holdsworth explained that increasing the size of the Task Force to accommodate all three alternates would require City Council action, but he advised against it.

TASK FORCE MEMBER UNGER MOVED TO HAVE STAFF CONTACT THE THREE ALTERNATES TO ASCERTAIN THEIR LEVEL OF INTEREST IN AN APPOINTMENT. IF MORE THAN ONE EXPRESSES INTEREST, THE APPOINTEE WILL BE DETERMINED BY A VOTE OF THE TASK FORCE IN A SPECIAL MEETING. TASK FORCE MEMBER HAYSLIP SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED BY A VOTE OF EIGHT (8) TO ZERO (0). TASK FORCE MEMBERS BIRCHLER AND JACKSON WERE ABSENT.

6. Scottsdale Convention & Visitors Bureau – Tourism Plan Update

Rachel Sacco presented an update on the initiatives the SCVB has been working on for the Task Force. These include:

- Specific conversations with operators who could add an experience in the downtown, particularly in terms of a physical space.
- Serving as a connector in support of the effort to create an animated downtown.
- Working with culture and arts representatives to create interpretive and ritual experiences.
- Working with tourism businesses and resort concierges to deepen their content about place, especially about the Sonoran Desert.
- Developing an ongoing program of seeding stories for the media.
- Working with leadership in the arts, Native American community, architecture, and health and wellness providers to connect experiences.
- Make the Indian Bend Wash story an origin story for Scottsdale.
- Convene experts, leisure travelers and ordinary citizens in a series of conversations around local themes.
- Working with Mayo Clinic to operate executive health checkups for group meetings, and market to executives.

- Reaching out to the Arizona Office of Tourism, tour operators, and destination attractions to activate the Arizona Central concept.
- Revitalizing golf in Scottsdale.
- Connecting group meeting planners to all of Scottsdale's offerings.
- Assisting in the effort to make Scottsdale's Desert Discovery Center a globally recognized center for researching aridification related to climate change, and to communicate scientific findings to visitors in a compelling way.
- Reaching out to the community to find unique Scottsdale stories to tell.

There is a lot of interest in the proposed ideas so far, but everything stalls when it comes to funding. Having a space to activate these activities in downtown would be a real benefit. Ms. LeBlanc suggested that the time is approaching for the Task Force to consider making specific requests of the SCVB in support of their initiatives.

7. Task Force – Project Proposal

Valeri LeBlanc reported that a number of committee initiatives are ready for further comment. She implored the Task Force to begin asking hard questions about the committee proposals. Ms. LeBlanc discussed a chapter of the book *Give and Take*. Basically it explains how a giver's motivation grows stronger when they begin seeing results. The authors also found that givers are much more likely to see the payouts of their work if their energies are concentrated in chunks of time, and that selfless givers burn out, while otherness givers stay motivated. They define otherness givers as people who engage in giving that is deeply tied to what is important to them.

- Community Foundation

Chairman Holdsworth reported on a discussion he had with Mayor Lane regarding the possibility of developing a community foundation for Scottsdale. The Arizona Community Foundation presented some attractive propositions. Mayor Lane decided to create a task force to urgently review the needs of downtown, and further discussion was suspended pending the findings of that group. Mr. Unger is participating in that effort and will provide a report at a future meeting.

- Arrival-Transportation Experience

Chairman Holdsworth presented a report on the arrival experience prepared by Task Force Member Dunn. He noted that the Super Bowl Host Committee has raised some concerns about the ESPN Fan Fest in Scottsdale, and as a result it would be inappropriate to discuss a Super Bowl shuttle at this time.

Ms. LeBlanc discussed the signage proposal. The first stage is to improve the arrival experience for visitors so that they have a physical orientation towards the Valley of the Sun. It would be in the form of a pool-table sized relief map at the airport and possibly other locations. It would give a sense of the geography and highlight interesting components. The first map would cost \$20,000, but subsequent maps only \$1,500.

Upon leaving the airport, visitors should be greeted by a sign welcoming them with the names of key cities. The process is a complicated one and will require the efforts of

someone who could dedicate themselves to it, possibly a consultant. Within Scottsdale, the wayfinding effort has largely been targeted at motorists, but little has been done to enhance pedestrian-focused wayfinding. She proposed hiring a consultant to help conceive a tourism-related wayfinding plan, and suggested the Task Force develop the resulting recommendations. The public would be invited to provide input. The end result should be to provide several options regarding locations and cost. The cost is estimated at \$110,000.

Ms. LeBlanc said these proposals would get people to relax upon arrival. The partnership with Sky Harbor Airport will be important, but has been very slow to develop thus far. Once they have arrived, it is very complicated for visitors to remember where things are. Guests have to be given the tools to explore, both physical and virtual. The more that people can understand where they are going and what they can experience there, the better chance they have for a good experience and will want to come back. Scottsdale's entry feature is staid. She proposed developing some new concepts with Public Art. A lively entry feature can let people know that they have arrived in Scottsdale. She estimated that it would take about a year to develop the concept, and more money will be required to turn the plans into reality.

Ms. LeBlanc invited critiques of the ideas. Chairman Holdsworth said people who arrive at the airport already know where they are going, so the relief map will only serve to point out places of interest. It will not necessarily drive guests to Scottsdale. People leaving the airport are unlikely to spend much time looking at maps; they just want to go where they are going. He said the airport does not seem interested in cooperating with Scottsdale. Task Force Member Wright suggested partnering with rental car agencies instead. Mr. Unger proposed a relief map that highlights the most popular tourist attractions rather than any individual city.

Task Force Member O'Shea said the majority of advertising at the airport is outsourced. Advertising at baggage claim can be effective. Clear Channel might be willing to work out an arrangement with the City. Ms. Sacco said that type of advertising works well for a specific event, but continuous advertising would be cost prohibitive.

- Arizona Central

Task Force Member Unger said downtown has a major problem that needs solving. Arizona Central is conceived as a physical location that would be the new home of the SCVB, a visitor center, tourist-related activities, and a plaza for happenings. Many locations have been considered, but the working group feels that a location near the canal banks would work best. The biggest stumbling block is the lack of money. At least \$150 million worth of requests have been made for TDC money and there simply is not that much to go around. Arizona Central is a brilliant idea that has developed with the input of many community members.

Task Force Member Unger proposed an idea that has only six months to become reality. The company he is affiliated with has a waterfront project in development with the financial capability to incorporate a one-acre town plaza at its center. He requested \$75,000 to support three related initiatives. Up to \$25,000 would be used to hire an expert in effective public spaces, to provide feedback on the viability of the proposal, and suggest ways to improve it. Up to \$25,000 would hire a case planner and architect to

design a visitor center and SCVB offices to be incorporated into the plaza. Finally, \$25,000 would be used to help fund Public Art's Canal Convergence kickoff. The developer has tenants lined up for high tech office space, and construction has to start by next summer/fall. A development agreement with the City would be necessary by the end of the year.

Task Force Member Enriquez said Arizona Central would animate downtown, and provide something to engage both locals and visitors. It would serve as a convenient spot to anchor downtown's energy. One proposed feature is for an underground cinema in the round that would give visitors interactive experiences with some of Arizona's outstanding attractions. Tours could be booked on site.

Task Force Member Unger added that tourism officials from around the state are greatly interested in a Scottsdale presence, but they had not been afforded that opportunity in the past. It is incumbent to be all-inclusive. In response to Chairman Holdsworth's inquiry, Mr. Katsenes said the TATF currently has the authority to allocate funds towards the three initiatives. Task Force Member O'Shea inquired whether tenants would have to be relocated to make room for the project. Task Force Member Unger responded that some would if the project goes through.

- Dashboard

Ms. LeBlanc reported that City staff worked up a beta model of the dashboard app to show to the Task Force. Task Force Member Wright explained that the app will serve as a one-stop shop for people interested in downtown. The exact metrics have not been decided on yet, but the opportunities are limitless. The idea is to provide information that will capture people's attention. It will be important for the City to track the way people use the dashboard so it could be made more effective. He demonstrated some of the features of the app for the Task Force.

Mr. Moriarity offered suggestions for the types of data that would be most effective. The current data reflects events that require permits, but not all events do. Mr. Katsenes said the Task Force will have to decide what type of information to include. Ms. LeBlanc said the shape of the app is good, but the data provided is not as useful as it could be. Joey Eschrich suggested offering different versions of the app to respond to the specific needs of the groups accessing it. Task Force Member Wright saw the app as a tool with a high degree of potential and little cost that could generate much useful data.

- Events/Festivals

Task Force Member Baker said the events committee has been working to identify three or more regional destination events that draw people into the city. They should enhance the character, place, and identity, and ideally be multi-week. The focus has been on the downtown. Events should be inclusive, creating a nexus that produces buy-in from multiple organizations. Another hope is to have it occur during the off-season. The committee discussed many proposals before settling on three distinct focus areas: the arts, Arizona cultures, and science/technology/the future.

Task Force Member Baker introduced the concept of an international destination arts festival located in downtown Scottsdale. The festival should be something that people

travel to Scottsdale specifically to attend, instead of something they attend when they are already here. It should feature world-class multi-disciplinary programming that is completely unique. It should possess an inclusive model that encourages partnerships and encompasses downtown as a whole. One organization working alone cannot generate the amount of energy required to create a destination event. Every retailer, restaurant, and artist must feel that they can become involved. The marketing should appeal to a broad audience and generate economic, social, and cultural benefits for the city. The model is to first attract the arts professionals, which will in turn attract the artists, which will in turn attract everyone else.

Task Force Member Baker said the working group analyzed successful case studies in cities the same size or smaller than Scottsdale. Based on this information the proposed festival would run during the October shoulder season for between ten to 21 days. The target is for about 100,000 people, with 30% to 50% coming from outside the area and staying at least three to four days. The Edinburgh International Festival is an interesting case study. Once it became successful, it served as the catalyst for a number of other fringe festivals that now attract a total of 400,000 people, doubling the size of the city during the festival weeks.

Task Force Member Baker introduced a prototype vision for the Outside Bounds Festival. It would be an internationally renowned multidisciplinary destination festival that would encompass all of downtown Scottsdale with performances, installations, and innovative creations inspired by the desert landscape and unique Scottsdale lifestyle. It is designed to advance the identity of the place. Since the Sonoran Desert is a unique feature, the concept is to have it serve as an inspiration for visiting artists to react to and create from. It would emphasize inclusiveness, and use multiple outdoor sites and untraditional spaces. Scottsdale's competitive advantages include the infrastructure and amenities to support the high-end clients who would attend. There are no international destination arts festivals on the West Coast. The shoulder season climate is good for business and would not compete with other major festivals of its type. The concept supports the goals of the Tourism Master Plan. It could serve as a catalyst for year-round happenings.

Task Force Member Baker reviewed the next steps. The first stage is research and development to specify the details of the plan. The second stage would be the establishment phase, securing seed funding and building the organization. The third stage is the launch. She requested \$72,500 to cover the cost of a market analysis for the three festivals, development feasibility, mentorship visits, and to complete a third-party business plan that could become a self-sustaining model. The goal is to have a finalized plan in eight months. In the best case scenario, the festival could begin in 2017. She said a festival at this level will be a high risk/ high reward venture. Scottsdale has to be bold and audacious to see the effort succeed.

Task Force Member O'Shea introduced the Arizona Cultures festival, which would be a more grass-roots effort than the arts festival. It would build upon some of the festivals that are already in place. The idea is to leverage Scottsdale's history and lifestyle in a move towards the future. It would attract tourists at a typically slow time in December. The working title is Christmas in the Desert. It is a multi-tiered concept that will start with Cowboy Christmas, and will encourage people to spend the holidays in the desert. Downtown will be activated with a themed holiday atmosphere. The festival would not

be limited just to Old Town. Existing events like Holiday Harmony could be incorporated. The goal is to start after Thanksgiving and run through December, for a total of 24 to 32 days. The target audience is all ages. Events will be developed specifically to attract holiday travelers.

Task Force Member O'Shea explained that the concept will build upon Scottsdale's unique cultural elements. It will make preparing for the holiday season fun and Western. People know that Scottsdale has high quality shopping, but it needs a lure. Measures of success include the amount of downtown traffic, buzz created by events, and the degree of merchant involvement. Long-range benefits will be increased bed tax, more room nights, and increased merchant/restaurant sales taxes. The festival will start small and then steadily expand into an international draw. As the festival grows, it will incorporate Native American, Mexican, and Spanish influences and spread out from the downtown area. The merchants are ready to go, and a management team has been identified. They have many ideas and are willing to support this concept over the long term. She requested funding to support some of the same activities that happened last year, such as stagecoach rides, growing the light displays, a Christmas tree, promotions, and street performances, as well as to cover the cost of managing the festival.

Chairman Holdsworth said this concept fits into the SCVB's Christmas activities. Mr. Geiogamah stated that this event requested Community Event funding last year, and this report offers a glimpse of where it could go in the future. Chairman Holdsworth encouraged the merchants to continue applying for Community Events funding and to use new money to grow the festival. Ms. LeBlanc noted that many have lamented the fading of the Western experience in Scottsdale, and this would be one way to start bringing that back. It would also help encourage merchants to partner with the City.

Joey Eschrich introduced the Scottsdale Science Week concept. The idea could be a way to expand and enhance the production value, audience, and sponsorship base of the arts festival. There are many ideas to get the arts and humanities in dialogue with engineering, science, and technology on a public stage. The festival could capitalize on Scottsdale's growing strength in bioscience and biotechnology. The concept builds upon ASU's Merge Festival, taking an interdisciplinary approach to engage people in critical and creative thinking about possible futures powered by real, emerging science and technology, and immersing people in visceral experiences. The statewide Arizona Science and Technology Festival is another inspiration. This is an opportunity to build on the relationship between ASU and Scottsdale. Desert cities can lead the way in sustainability technology.

Mr. Eschrich proposed a City of the Future concept that engages residents and tourists in imagining a range of possible futures for the city. The content would focus on experiences rather than panels of experts. Immersive experiences would be set up around the city, including vacant storefronts, so that people could drop in and out at their own pace. It would refuse the false dichotomy between Scottsdale's Western history as a frontier town and as a frontier town for the technological future. It would be intimately connected to the arts festival in various ways.

Mr. Eschrich said this concept could establish Scottsdale as an international destination for science and technology, highlight the city's biotech industry, and show how the area's rich Western history can be used as a way to shape the development of emerging

technologies to transform the way lives are lived in the 21st century. The target audience is the next generation of youth and young professionals. Success will be measured through the amount of global and national media attention generated, the degree of integration with existing events, and the number of private/public partnerships built. The event can generate a range of futures for the city and help people think about them in an engaging way.

Task Force Member Baker said the committee is creating a list of recommendations to make it easier for other festivals to come to Scottsdale, to leverage downtown, and to collaborate with other events, happenings, and animations.

- Happenings/Animations

Chairman Holdsworth noted that Kate Birchler recommended merging the Events committee with Happenings and Animations. Ben Moriarity said street entertainers have the right to perform on sidewalks so long as they are not electronically amplified. They could perform as part of larger events. The City could also contract uses within its own right-of-way. The City provides street entertainment in the Arts District on Thursday nights and Saturdays. The working group proposes expanding that scope to include all of downtown, and from 59 active days to 200 active days. The types of activities should also expand to include more than just music or artists. A vetting group would review happenings to determine what is working and adjust as necessary. He requested an allocation of \$75,000 to add to the current \$25,000 budget in order to initially expand the scope of the project. The goal is to encourage the merchants to develop partnerships with the contractors so that the program becomes more organic.

Mr. Moriarity said this idea would require buy-in from merchants, property owners and Code Enforcement. The project's success will be validated by positive comments from visitors and residents, and performances that are uniquely artful, and not nuisances. Chairman Holdsworth suggested the involvement of the SCVB and City staff. Task Force Member O'Shea proposed that this endeavor be coordinated under one management group.

Susan Morrow discussed a grass-roots approach to animation. Scottsdale Best Day Ever would be a citizen tour guide program activated through volunteers. The starting point would be a contest asking locals to share their views of the best attractions to bring out of town guests to. Guests could meet their guides at Arizona Central or through an app, or through SCVB. Tours could be built around specific themes or locations.

Ms. Morrow said another idea is a Passport to Downtown, which could be an app or a sponsored printed guide that would incorporate highlights of the Best Day Ever tours. People would be able to use this guide to experience downtown Scottsdale's key sites on any given day at their own leisure. Ms. Morrow felt that the Animation track, as conceived, could either remain independent or merge with Rituals, since they are designed to run all year, not just during specific events. The Happenings track, on the other hand, overlaps with Events.

- Rituals

Ms. LeBlanc reported on an idea to develop three well-defined interpretive tours of downtown on bicycles, and to connect people to Scottsdale's biking assets such as Indian Bend Wash and mountain biking trails. The goal is to turn Scottsdale into a place known for its biking. She suggested establishing the downtown identity first, since it will be the most visible aspect, and then expand from there. The request is for \$23,000 to work on signage and improvements necessary to the Mountain Trail, which will provide views of Camelback and the McDowell Mountains. This trail will feature plenty of interpretive features and be short and easy. Other routes would be developed afterwards.

8. TATF Chairman Update

Chairman Holdsworth concluded with final thoughts and encouraged Task Force Members to continue engaging an ever broader circle of citizens into the various initiatives.

9. Identification of Future Agenda Items

None.

10. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

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